



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Kentucky Department of
Corrections

For Immediate Release

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Drop in Female Offenders Leads to Conversion of WKCC

Correctional institution will convert to 2 separate prisons, one each for males, females

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 2, 2015) – Responding to changing population trends, the Western Kentucky Correctional Complex (WKCC) will be converted into two distinct, separate prisons this summer. The change will result in a 200-bed, minimum-custody facility for females, to be named the Ross-Cash Center; and a 470-bed, secure-custody facility for male offenders, which will retain the WKCC name.

The conversion, which is estimated to save more than \$700,000 annually and increase the number of female offenders in jails eligible to work in community service, is expected to be completed within 90 days.

There will be no loss of jobs.

“This conversion builds on our practice of responding to the ever-changing corrections population with innovative solutions, while continuing to manage offenders in state-run facilities and with our partners in the county jails,” Department of Corrections Commissioner LaDonna Thompson said. “This doesn’t change the capacity of our prisons, but by changing the populations served, we have more flexibility to address current needs.”

Male and female inmates will be physically separated from each other in two distinct, different facilities. The men’s institution will have a secure perimeter fence, separating it from the women’s prison. In addition, a visual barrier will be placed between the two prisons.

The conversion is in response to a shift in the female offender population after the implementation of numerous initiatives outlined in 2011’s House Bill 463, including mandatory re-entry supervision, substance abuse treatment in the community, changes in sentencing guidelines and graduated sanctions for offenders under supervision. These initiatives impacted the profile and lowered the number of female offenders.

Establishing a smaller, minimum-custody female prison will allow these offenders to continue maintaining the farm operation and community service details in western Kentucky

while placing them in the lowest possible custody level housing, adhering to best correctional practices.

The conversion will result in a minimal number of additional staff, with the bulk of services to be shared between the two facilities. Even with the additional positions to manage the new prison, the conversion is expected to save more than \$700,000 a year through efficiencies by utilizing previously open beds at Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women in Pewee Valley.

The new facility is named for two Department of Corrections staff members killed in the line of duty in the 1980s, Patricia Ross and Fred Cash. Ross was killed at the Kentucky State Penitentiary in 1984 and Cash was killed at the Western Kentucky Farm Center in 1986.

WKCC was converted from a male prison to a female prison housing minimum- and medium-custody inmates in 2010. Changes made at that time to accommodate the female population will remain. The only modification needed will be a visual barrier between the two adjoining prisons.

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